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PRESS RELEASE

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Talented LA Philharmonic Violinist Reaches Out to Downtown Homeless & Mentally Ill Through the Power of Music

Premier violinist Robert Gupta continues concert series, bringing classical music to Skid Row.

Los Angeles, CA – Accomplished Los Angeles Philharmonic violinist, Robert Gupta, will once again share his passion for classical music by presenting a mini concert on Monday, March 7th at 2PM, at Downtown Mental Health Center (529 S. Maple Avenue in Los Angeles).

“My main goal through these performances is to establish a long-term relationship with the clients of mental health,” stated Gupta. “What I’ve found is that constant contact and building a relationship with them – through music – helps people. Music is therapy and medicine for the soul.”

This will be Gupta’s third performance at Downtown Mental Health Center after recently designating it as home base for his concerts. In the past few years, he has brought his musical activism to underserved communities throughout Southern California.

“A full life includes the appreciation of beauty and the arts. This is why we believe Robert Gupta’s concerts are such an important contribution to the mission of *Hope, Wellness and Recovery*,” said Marvin Southard, D.S.W., Director of Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

Gupta began teaching violin to Nathaniel Ayers in 2008, and has since shared his love of music with the homeless and mentally ill. Ayers was the subject of the book and film, entitled *The Soloist*, by Los Angeles Times columnist Steve Lopez.

“To perform for the audience at Skid Row brings meaning to the music I play. They truly listen to every note and hang onto it,” Gupta explained. “When I play, I communicate something. It can be felt much deeper within ourselves.”

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In 2007, Gupta joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic (LA Phil) at the age of 19. Before joining the LA Phil, he received a master's degree in music from Yale University and a bachelor's degree in pre-medical biology from Marist College. While an undergrad, he attended the Manhattan School of Music and the Juilliard School of Music, Pre-College Division. Gupta is a TED Senior Fellow.

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health is the largest county-operated mental health department in the United States, directly operating 75 program sites and more than 100 co-located sites. Each year, it contracts with approximately 1,000 agencies and individual practitioners to provide a spectrum of mental health services to more than 250,000 residents of all ages. The Department's mission -- enriching lives through partnership to strengthen our community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency -- is accomplished by working with stakeholders and community partners to provide clinically competent, culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate mental health services to clients in the least restrictive manner possible.

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